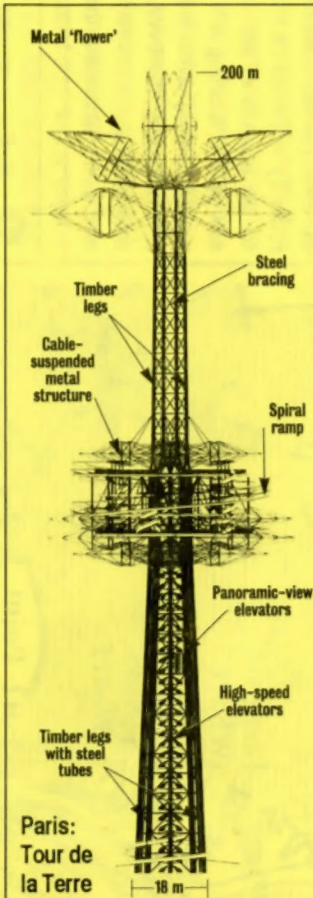


# THE BOSTON INFORMER

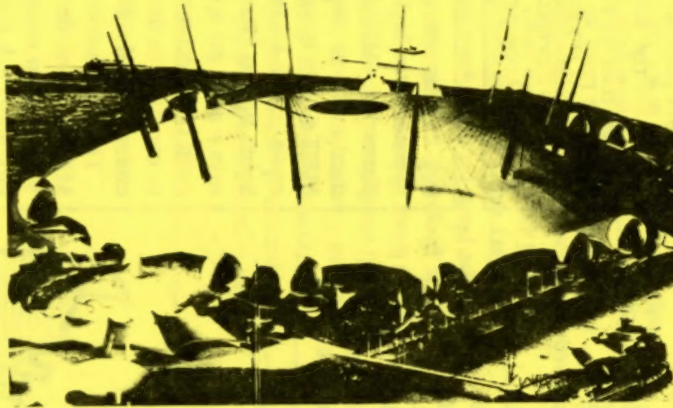
No. 36

The truly highbrow rag for people who can read

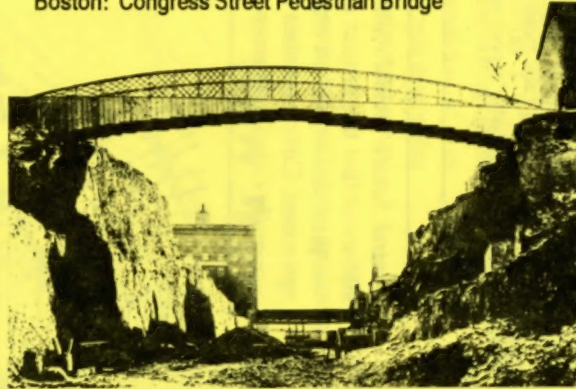
April 1, 1998



London: Millennium Dome



Boston: Congress Street Pedestrian Bridge



## MILLENNIUM FEVER!

- London does the Millennium Dome
- Paris does the Tour de la Terre
- Washington prepares the Bridge to the 21st Century
- ...and Boston hurtles forward with the pedestrian bridge across Congress Street

Not to be outdone by London, Paris and Washington in the race to build a "big project" to mark the millennium, Boston's leaders have re-packaged the pedestrian bridge over Congress Street as "a bridge connecting the past—Faneuil Hall—to the future—a revitalized City Hall Plaza."

Shown under construction, the new pedestrian bridge has undergone several design changes. These changes are the result of new requirements to accommodate full-size snow-removal equipment, bicycles and Barnum & Bailey circus animals for their annual parade through downtown streets.

Consequently, the bridge is no longer an "inobtrusive" feature officials once boasted, making it officially a "big project" and a showcase for the millennium.



Big Dig officials sift through debris near Leverett Circle on a tip that a priceless chamber pot of Rev. William Blaxton, the original Boston settler, is buried there. According to Big Dig spokesman Olive Tospend, officials will immediately sell the chamber pot, worth millions.

Sale of the chamber pot is just one way the Big Dig is making up for reduced federal aid. Other innovations include contests on the inside of candy wrappers; diversion of unclaimed bottle refunds; sale of official "Big Dig dirt"; and a new tax on Beanie Babies.

## MBTA Adopt-a-Station Program Advances

On the heels of designating its first "adopted station"—State/Citizens Bank—the MBTA announced three new MBTA stations that will be "adopted" by corporate entities. The MBTA's first adopted station by Citizens Bank is also the first corporate adoption of a transit station in the country and puts the MBTA in the forefront of something, for once.

The three new adopted stations are:

- Chinatown/Registry/Millennium/Liberty Books/St. Francis House—Millennium wanted to be listed first, but the Chinatown community prevailed.
- North Station/Fleet Center/Hooters—Despite rumors that the letter "o" in North Station would be replaced with the signature Hooters "o", this is not true, according to the MBTA.
- Hynes Convention Center/Tower Records/Berklee College of Music/Daddy's Junky Music—Sponsors of this

station have asked to pipe music into the station as part of their agreement. Since most MBTA announcements are unintelligible anyway, the noise, er, music, won't be a problem.

The MBTA Advisory Board praised the MBTA for its innovation, but said the MBTA's own policy, adopted in 1986, forbids double station names. The executive director expressed concern that the long names would require larger maps and brochures and that an estimate of the cost of these expenses should be quantified.

Also questioned was whether passengers would be able to understand a long list when the driver announces the station. MBTA officials said the new names will actually be easier to understand, because most announcements are completely garbled in the beginning, and now, with the longer name, passengers will have more of a chance to decipher part of the name.



## They Said It!

"There's nothing political about this project."

Andrew Paven, Central Artery/Tunnel (CA/T) project spokesperson on \$2 million ad campaign scheduled, coincidentally, during election year

"...[The South Boston Seaport plan] isn't a master plan. It's a servant plan. The masters are the public and private development pressures."

Robert Campbell, Boston Globe correspondent

"[Central Artery/Tunnel project] design is 95.7 percent done."

Matt Wiley, CA/T project chief

"No state project counts interest on the bonds as a cost."

Peter Zuk, CA/T project director, when criticized for leaving out \$775 million in interest costs from the budget.

"The project would cost half a billion dollars because of interest costs."

Acting Governor Cellucci, opposing a \$200 million water filtration plant.

"Now our job is to listen to peoples' responses to our proposal."

Catherine Donaher of the Trust for City Hall Plaza on its activities after release of the final Plan to Revitalize Boston's City Hall Plaza.

"If you tell me you're not in the tank, take off your scuba gear before you say it."

East Boston resident to Trudy Cox, head of Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

## Headlines You'll Never Read...

- Bob Kraft buys house in South Boston
- Urban Ring circumferential transit lines open tomorrow
- Steve Kaiser takes consulting job at Central Artery/Tunnel project
- MBTA launches ad campaign promoting Bikes on the T program
- Bike lanes added to depressed Central Artery
- MBTA historian and State Transportation Librarian George Sanborn retires
- Monica Lewinsky appointed to the MassPike Board
- MBTA restores Arborway streetcar service
- Elvis spotted on East Boston ferry
- MBTA transitway serves new convention center

Central Artery/Tunnel chief Matt Wiley's statement that the project is 95.7 percent complete has set off an explosion of disagreement. Critics maintain that the project is actually only 95.5 percent complete.

**1 Task Force Appointed for City Violations**—Mayor Menino has appointed a Task Force to seek out scofflaws and violators of any old law, guideline, advisory or regulation in Boston. This new Task Force sweeps in and tackles those problems that get bogged down in administrative red tape and comes up with remediation plans to deal with the laggards who scoff at the public laws. If you need Task Force action, call 1-800-635-TASK.

**2** ζεντ Βουλδινγ 4 ον Παρχελ. Ωθεν τη πεντ βουλδινγ ωασ οριγιναλλη δε-σιγνεδ ον τη παρχε **Spaulding Rehab Center** ανδ ατ τη MBTA Ηαψμαρκετ στατιον, ιτ ινχλυδεδ **Barry Locke** τη ελεπισατεδ Χεντραλ Αρτερρη. Πλαιχε ανδ γρουινδ-φλοορ ρεταιλ σπαχε.

**3** Citing concerns it would not be able to procure the high-tech electric vehicle as planned, the MBTA announced it will use a tried-and-true technology instead. The **MBTA says it will run buses pulled by oxen** in the underground tunnel for the South Boston Piers transitway. The MBTA says it must get approval from the Department of Telecommunications and Energy to use oxen in the tunnel due to methane emissions and solid waste.

This alternative was selected after the MBTA considered an offer by the Volkswagen company for an innovative buy-leaseback program for one-half of all the 1998 Beetles manufactured. The MBTA recently adjusted its ridership projections for the transitway and determined that that new Beetle, running at 90-second headways, would be the perfect size vehicle. The deal fell through, however, when the MBTA realized it had no money to buy a new set of wrenches to maintain the German vehicles.

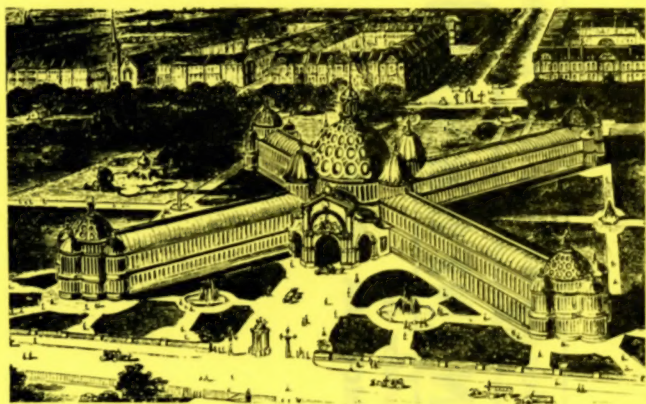
**4 Relief is coming to Boston**—Mayor Menino is pushing a program to install public, self-cleaning street toilets around Boston as quickly as possible, which usually means in about one year.

Although public, self-cleaning toilets are common in Europe and in over 100 cities in 16 countries, they are not common in the United States. The pioneer in this country is San Francisco which first installed them in 1995, and as of January, the city's 20 automatic toilets have recorded 1.2 million flushes.

The MBTA, Boston Redevelopment Authority, Landmark Commission, Department of Public Works and neighborhood groups will have seats in the toilet program.



## City Hall Plaza historic building proposed

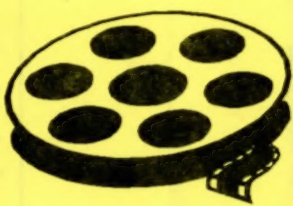


In an unexpected twist in the saga of plans to revitalize City Hall Plaza, historians have resurrected the design drawings for the Massachusetts Conservatory of Art, Science, and Historical Relics, a building nixed for construction in the Public Garden in 1859 over concerns about building in the Garden.

Having waited 140 years, supporters see the ongoing debate over whether the private sector should be in control of the city's civic space as a chance to finally build this thing.

## Movies Not to Miss!

**Senseless**—the story of building a pedestrian bridge over Congress Street.



**Mousehunt**—a frightening epic on the use of weapons of mass destruction by the CA/T project to kill imaginary rodents.

**Good Will Hunting**—a romance about the Central Artery/Tunnel (CA/T) project looking for love and respect by spending \$2 million on public relations.

**The Full Monty**—a documentary exposing everything about the decay and health hazards of state-owned buildings.

**As Good as it Gets**—the full story of the Bechtel/Parsons Brinckerhoff CA/T management contract.

**L.A. Confidential**—an exciting mystery about the secret transfer of cost-overrun techniques from the Boston CA/T project to the L.A. subway construction.

**Wild Things**—a drama of North End residents after a noisy night of CA/T construction

The commonwealth's main tool for protection and management of coastal and inland areas, the **Chapter 91 waterways licensing statute of 1866, is being updated.** Chapter 91 will be updated to Chapter 91A/92, and will strengthen the current law's emphasis on public access along the water's edge.

The proposed changes to Chapter 91 came about because plans for open space above the depressed Central Artery allow construction of anything with a public function (such as a five-story museum or a bank of public toilets). Not to be upstaged by this bizarre definition of open space, the Dept. of Environmental Protection has proposed a new plan to deal with waterfront edge properties. The new Chapter 91A/92 allows development as long as human beings can get close to the facility and think that some water connection is being made with it.

Anticipating more requirements would be piled on, developers of the hotel proposed for Battery Wharf say that there will be water in most of the rooms and thereby the hotel will qualify for this new Chapter provision.

Other developments facing the new requirements are considering using water sounds, waterwheels, waterwings, the smell of dead fish piped in through air conditioners and green algae for room decor to meet the new stringent requirements.

The legislature is expected to vote on the proposed Chapter 91A/92 as soon as it decides on the official state antacid tablet.



City of Boston Survey

## Boston 400: A Wish List

Dear Boston Resident: Planning for Boston in the year 2030, its 400th anniversary, we have a commitment to involve all people who live in the city. We begin in the neighborhoods, for it is you who know your neighborhoods best. Therefore, we are asking each and every one of the city's residents to take a few minutes to fill out this vitally important survey about your hopes and dreams for the city in 2030.

Be assured that all surveys, that's right, all surveys, will be read and a complex matrix of all items created for fun and amusement. Please feel free to add comments and suggestions at the bottom of the survey.

Thank you, and future Bostonians thank you, too.

### What do you think should guide future growth?

- ☐ motherhood
- ☐ apple pie
- ☐ multi-screen theaters
- ☐ Beanie Baby manufacturing

### What should our streets be like?

- ☐ clean
- ☐ let WalkBoston take them over
- ☐ they should have street signs

### What additional public art should we have?

- ☐ monument commemorating first bathtub
- ☐ pavement markings delineating location of old Central Artery supports
- ☐ clock that works

Help us! Comments and suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to:

Boston Survey  
PO Box 1473  
Boston, MA 02205-1473

## Boston 400: It's your civic duty

## You were asking...

- Q. In the State Saltonstall Building, how did asbestos particles get onto office furniture without being airborne?
- A. The Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act regulations do not allow asbestos to be airborne.
- Q. How come the proposed Congress Street pedestrian bridge is never mentioned in the March 1998 plan for the redesign of City Hall Plaza despite being shown on all the drawings?
- A. Perhaps because it is a bad idea.
- Q. Now that the state has admitted the Southeast Expressway high-occupancy vehicle lane is underused, more stickers allowing use of the lane by two-person carpools are supposed to be available. Where can I get one?
- A. To encourage carpools in the HOV lane, Mass. Highway officials are issuing stickers through the District 3 office in Worcester, Tuesday and Friday afternoons. Notarized applications are accepted from 1:00 to 3:00.
- Q. How much is the Central Artery/Tunnel project costing now?
- A. With 40 percent of the project complete, the remaining 60 percent of the \$10.8 billion project will cost \$2.5 million per day for every day of the next seven years. Honest.

### Welcome to The Boston Misinformer,

the annual April Fool's issue of The Boston Informer, an otherwise "serious" newsletter covering development, construction and transportation downtown.

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